

the guardian weekly

March 2012

Level » Lower intermediate
Style » Lesson plan



Welcome to the Guardian Weekly's special news-based materials to support learners and teachers of English. Each month, the Guardian Weekly newspaper selects topical news articles that can be used to practise English language skills. The materials are graded for two levels: advanced and lower intermediate. These worksheets can be downloaded free from guardian.co.uk/weekly/. You can also find more advice for teachers and learners from the Guardian Weekly's Learning English section on the site.

Germany gets tough on no-ticket travel

Materials prepared by Janet Hardy-Gould

Instructions

Lesson focus: reading; have to, don't have to, mustn't

Materials: materials sheet, article

Time: 50 minutes

- Ask students to think about a local transport network. How would they explain to a visitor the rules for using tickets? For example, you have to buy tickets from a kiosk. You don't have to show your ticket to the bus driver. You mustn't get on the bus without a ticket. Revise *have to*, *don't have to* and *mustn't*. **12 mins**
- Student task 1: Students complete the sentences with the correct person. Feedback. **6 mins**
fare dodger, plain-clothed inspector, repeat offender, ticket inspector, passengers
 - A ___ is someone who travels on a transport system.
 - A ___ is someone with a uniform who checks tickets.
 - A ___ is someone without a uniform who checks tickets.
 - A ___ is someone who doesn't buy a ticket for their journey.
 - A ___ is someone who is caught without a ticket more than once.**Answers:** a passenger b ticket inspector c plain-clothed inspector d fare dodger e repeat offender
- Student task 2. Give out the article. Students read and choose the answers to the questions. **12 mins**
 - Tourists are surprised because they can't see any ___ at stations.
a inspectors b barriers c ticket machines
 - In ___ 3.5% of journeys are made without a ticket.
a Berlin b Munich c Germany
 - ___ now pay a fine of \$80.
a first-time fare dodgers b repeat offenders c visitors with no ticket
 - In Berlin, you ___ see ticket inspectors.
a often b very rarely c never
 - The MVV Blitzler service gives information about ___.
a inspectors b new speed cameras c fare dodging fines
 - The VDV is angry because fare dodgers now cost companies ___ a year.
a \$50m b \$130m c \$330m**Answers:** 1 b 2 c 3 a 4 b 5 a 6 c
- Students complete the summary below with have/has to, don't have to or mustn't. **10 mins**
Visitors to Germany are surprised when they (a) ___ show a ticket at tube stations and they (b) ___ go through any barriers. However, officials are becoming worried about fare dodgers and they often remind passengers that they (c) ___ enter the tube without a ticket. There are now bigger fines too. Fare dodgers (d) ___ pay \$80 and any repeat offender (e) ___ pay \$160.
Answers: a don't have to b don't have to c mustn't d have to e has to
- Class discussion. Students compare the situation with fare dodging in their country to Germany. Encourage reference to the article. **10 mins**

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Materials sheet

Student tasks

1 Complete the sentences with the correct person.

fare dodger, plain-clothed inspector, repeat offender, ticket inspector, passenger

a A is someone who travels on a transport system.

b A is someone with a uniform who checks tickets.

c A is someone without a uniform who checks tickets.

d A is someone who doesn't buy a ticket for their journey.

e A is someone who is caught without a ticket more than once.

2 Read the article and choose the answers to the questions.

1 Tourists are surprised because they can't see any at stations.

a inspectors b barriers c ticket machines

2 In 3.5% of journeys are made without a ticket.

a Berlin b Munich c Germany

3 now pay a fine of \$80.

a first-time fare dodgers b repeat offenders c visitors with no ticket

4 In Berlin, you see ticket inspectors.

a often b very rarely c never

5 The MVV Blitzer service gives information about .

a inspectors b new speed cameras c fare dodging fines

6 The VDV is angry because fare dodgers now cost companies a year.

a \$50m b \$130m c \$330m

4 Complete the summary with have/has to, don't have to or mustn't.

Visitors to Germany are surprised when they (a) show a ticket at tube stations and they (b) go through any barriers. However, officials are becoming worried about fare dodgers and they often remind passengers that they (c) enter the tube without a ticket. There are now bigger fines too. Fare dodgers (d) pay \$80 and any repeat offender (e) pay \$160.

Article: Germany gets tough on no-ticket travel

- It is one of the things that always surprises visitors to Germany: how come there are no barriers at tube stations? "It could never work back home," say tourists from countries such as Britain. "No one would pay."
- About 3.5% of journeys on German public transport are not paid for, according to statistics from the Association of German Transport Operators (VDV). In Berlin, it is 6%. That might not sound a lot to a visitor but it's too much for the VDV. It is now demanding harder punishments for fare dodgers plus an increase in on-the-spot fines from \$50 to \$80, with \$160 for repeat offenders.
- The association believes the current fine doesn't stop *schwarzfahrer* ("black riders") who take their chances without a ticket. The \$50 fine is equal to 17 journeys in Berlin. Here, it is sometimes possible to go for weeks, if not months, without being stopped by a ticket inspector.
- The VDV is also angry about a new internet "service" in one German city that helps fare dodgers avoid ticket inspectors. The MVV Blitzer warns passengers in Munich where plain-clothed inspectors are working and what they are wearing.
- Oliver Wolff from the VDV is worried that not paying is becoming socially acceptable in Germany. "It has now got to the point where fare dodgers are organising themselves and helping each other online. It's this sort of open activity that is making travelling without a ticket seem less harmful," he told the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper.



Fair fare? Passengers in Berlin Sean Gallup/Getty

- The VDV says fare dodging costs German transport companies up to \$330m a year. A further \$130m is spent on ticket inspectors.
- Although Germany is generally thought of as an obedient nation, there are certain exceptions, especially in the area of motoring. Radio bulletins regularly include *blitzermeldungen* (flash warnings), which tell drivers where speed cameras are working on any particular day.

Original article by Helen Pidd, rewritten by Janet Hardy-Gould